



Interrogating Epistemological Frameworks and Post-Genocide Governance in Rwandan Africanist Scholarship

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ABSTRACT

Recent scholarship on post-genocide governance has been dominated by Western theoretical frameworks, often marginalising African epistemological perspectives. This creates a significant gap in understanding the locally-grounded intellectual and policy discourses shaping the nation's development trajectory. This commentary critically examines the epistemological foundations of contemporary Africanist scholarship produced within Rwanda. It aims to analyse how this body of work engages with, and potentially challenges, dominant external narratives on state-building and societal transformation. The analysis employs a critical discourse analysis of prominent scholarly texts and policy documents generated by Rwandan academic and research institutions. This involves deconstructing underlying assumptions, theoretical allegiances, and normative positions. A predominant theme is the strategic integration of indigenous governance concepts, such as *ubwiyunge* (reconciliation), with modernist state efficiency models. This synthesis forms a distinct epistemological hybrid that actively resists characterisations of the state as either purely authoritarian or liberatory. Rwandan Africanist scholarship constitutes a sophisticated, internally coherent field that proffers a counter-narrative to externally imposed analytical categories, offering a more nuanced interpretation of post-conflict governance. International scholars should engage more deeply with this endogenous scholarship as a primary source. Funding bodies should prioritise supporting local research agendas that further develop these epistemological frameworks. epistemology, post-conflict governance, African studies, indigenous knowledge, state-building, Rwanda This commentary provides the first systematic analysis of the epistemological hybridity characterising

contemporary Rwandan Africanist scholarship, identifying its core synthesising mechanism.

Keywords: *Post-genocide reconstruction, African epistemologies, Rwandan governance, Decolonising methodologies, Great Lakes region*

Article Highlights

- Critiques the marginalisation of African epistemologies in post-genocide governance studies.
- Identifies a distinct epistemological hybrid in Rwandan Africanist scholarship.
- Analyses the synthesis of indigenous governance concepts with state efficiency models.
- Calls for deeper engagement with endogenous scholarship as a primary source.

Core Analytical Contribution

Provides the first systematic analysis of the epistemological hybridity characterising contemporary Rwandan Africanist scholarship, identifying its core synthesising mechanism.

This commentary demands a critical re-evaluation of the sources and frameworks used to analyse post-conflict governance.

ABSTRACT-ONLY PUBLICATION

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